

PRESS RELEASE

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Culinary competition inspires innovation

Viking Line launches new Pure Nordic Tastes menus

This autumn, passengers will be able to enjoy a brand new version of Viking Line's Pure Nordic Tastes. The menus were composed based on the selections of a demanding jury, with as many as 76 entries submitted by the company's sous chefs. The winners, Maarit Juvonen and Hanna Suonpää, will now present tasty dishes including beer-marinated reindeer fillet, northern Swedish oyster mushrooms and fermented milk ice cream.

Every autumn, Viking Line offers exciting theme weeks with special menus for passengers. Last year's Pure Nordic Tastes theme was so popular that this year the company decided to update its Nordic menus.

"We have a very high level of ambition among the sous chefs and garde-mangers who work on our seven vessels, and we really want to make good use of this and showcase their ability. So we announced an in-house competition last spring, inspired to some extent by popular television cookery programmes. The jury did not have an easy time choosing the winning entries, but we are extremely proud of the final results," says Viking Line Restaurant Manager Bodil Ståhl.

Of the 76 entries submitted by 21 chefs, 17 dishes were selected to continue to the semi-finals, which were held on the Viking Grace on May 6. The competitors were given the task of preparing their dishes as well as presenting them to the jury, which consisted of five executive chefs. The winning dishes incorporated typical Nordic ingredients such as game, fish, root vegetables and berries.

"Our aim was to spotlight clean Nordic flavours when we composed these dishes. We were inspired by all the wonderful local ingredients around us and created a menu that is modern, natural and seasonal," says Maarit Juvonen, sous chef on the Viking Grace and one of the competitors with the most dishes on this autumn's Pure Nordic Tastes menu.

Viking Line's winning chefs will receive a trip to what some experts call the world's best restaurant, Noma in Copenhagen. The Pure Nordic Tastes menu is available on board all Viking Line vessels from October 1, 2015, to February 29, 2016.

For further information, please contact:

Christa Grönlund, Communications Manager, Marketing Communications,
christa.gronlund@vikingline.com, +358 9 123 5242.

Pure Nordic Tastes Menu

Starters

- Sugar-cured whitefish on pea purée with whitefish roe, lemon mayonnaise and black bread crumbs
- Potato and leek soup with crispy bacon, apple cubes, watercress and herb-infused oil
- Slow-baked salmon with parsnip purée, beetroot, salmon roe and dill mayonnaise
- Beer-marinated reindeer fillet with juniper pudding, lingonberry purée and Jerusalem artichoke chips

Main courses

- Pan-fried cod with sea mussel sauce, whitefish roe, cauliflower purée and fennel
- Fillet of elk with gravy, potato dumpling, brown butter and roasted carrots
- Lightly smoked Norwegian fjord salmon with lemon hollandaise, king crab croquettes served with Jerusalem artichoke purée, fennel crudité and pickled cucumber
- Roasted fillet of beef rolled in game crisps, beef cheek and morels with celery purée
- Fillet of venison with lingonberry gravy, beetroot cooked three ways and parsnip purée
- “Reindeer leg au vin” – leg of reindeer slow-cooked in red wine with pearl onions, bacon, northern Swedish oyster mushrooms, rosemary, garlic, parsley and *lapskojs* meat and vegetable stew
- Panko-fried chickpea croquettes with roasted carrots, cocktail tomato and soya bean vinaigrette

Desserts

- Fresh bilberries mixed with sugar, bilberry sorbet and Skyr yogurt flavoured with white chocolate and meringue crisp
- Fermented milk ice cream flavoured with lemon, Hanna’s sponge cake, sea buckthorn cream and crispy linseed biscuit
- Toasted Nordic muesli, forest berry preserve with vanilla custard and arctic raspberry sorbet
- Caramelised kalvdans – colostrum milk pudding with cloudberry preserve
- Handmade chocolates from Åland Islands with Nordic flavours

